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which made Ozanam so remarkable. Since that time, both have passed away from this earthly scene,— one in the prime of life, the other long before he had reached that period; but while they lived, they lived nobly, and to both may be applied the words of Ozanam himself: “ We are here below to fulfil the will of God. This will must be done from day to day, and he who dies leaving his task unfinished is as far advanced in the eyes of Supreme Justice as he to whom leisure is given to finish it entirely.”

ART. IX.—*A Year of Revolution. From a Journal kept at Paris in 1848.* By the MARQUIS OF NORMANBY, K. G. In two volumes. London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, and Roberts. 1857. 8vo. pp. xvii., 481, 431.

THIS book has, in every way, made a great sensation upon the other side of the Atlantic; in England, because it was written by an English diplomatist, in the full exercise of his diplomatic functions, a somewhat unusual thing; in France, because French politics was its theme, and because it was generally believed that the author was perfectly sincere, and spoke his mind frankly upon men and things. Before the merits or demerits of the work itself were discussed, it was much disputed whether the writer was justified in writing it. *Prima facie*, this was, by all observers of tradition, decided in the negative; and to a certain degree he was condemned beforehand. In France, particularly, the large and influential party of the Orleanists (still by far the largest and most influential party in the nation) made haste to cry out as loudly as possible that Lord Normanby had been guilty of the most enormous indiscretion, in publishing his observations upon events which took place while he occupied in France the post of British Ambassador to Louis Philippe's court. The Orleanists had wind of some of the statements which Lord Normanby would make, their own uneasy consciences led them to guess at a good deal more, and their desire was to

discredit the book and to raise a prejudice against it before it should be read and impartially judged by the public at large. This it has now been; and we think we may say the opinion given has been unquestionably in its favor. The party we have alluded to in France naturally remains hostile; for there is not one of the pages of the first volume which does not prove that for all that has occurred in France since the year 1840 (the date of M. Guizot's coming to office as prime-minister), for all the troubles and catastrophes and humiliations which the people of France have been forced to endure, in having every shadow of liberty and every hope of participation in the task of self-government wrested from them, the Orleanist party, personified by Louis Philippe and M. Guizot, are entirely and absolutely responsible. We are not aware that there is anywhere to be found a clearer, simpler, or more "unvarnished tale" than this, told by Lord Normanby, of the faults, short-comings, and blindnesses of the men who, in the name of the "Revolution of July," misruled France for the last eight years of Louis Philippe's reign, and provoked the outbreak styled justly enough by Lamartine the "Revolution of Contempt," thus bringing on the present state of servility to which the country has been gradually but inevitably reduced. In this respect the book is an incontestably useful one; for it sets before men's eyes the events and the men that are now too soon passing out of mind. We will quote the author's own words as to the importance of the narrative.

"I am convinced that a sufficiently vivid recollection has not been retained, by the very generation amongst whom the events occurred, of the real character of that revolutionary spirit which in 1848 paralyzed the governmental action of most of the countries of Europe. They should be reminded of the moments of fatal import to the very existence of society, the dangers of which were escaped almost by miracle. The abortive result of so many day-dreams of Utopian perfection left almost every individual less happy, every country less prosperous, every people not only less free, but *less hopeful of freedom hereafter*, — for what rational hope for the immediate future could be retained where the reaction was produced by the universal odium which the most popular form of government had upon experience excited in the vast majority of the very people with whom the movement originated? There are,

too, others of opposite tendencies, to whom salutary reflection, founded on accurate information as to the events of 1848, might operate as a useful warning. *A dissecting exposure of its lame and impotent results should be preceded by a searching retrospect of its predisposing causes* ; and rulers of every country, not excluding our own, would do well not to forget that the perversion alone, through corruption to selfish purposes, *by clever men*, of that very form of government which we are accustomed to consider the most perfect, produced the *révolution de mépris*."

In what he here sets forth, Lord Normanby is right. The causes, the character, and the non-duration of that popular movement, entitled the Revolution of February, have, if ever properly studied, been forgotten, and consequently the lesson they contain has been unapplied. The work now lying before us fills up two or three important gaps in the contemporary history of Continental Europe, and is therefore, even to us, advanced sentinels of another world and of a new civilization, fraught with the deepest interest.

Lord Normanby's book treats of what happened in France between July, 1847, and December, 1848, when the first Presidential election gave her present master to the nation, and took supreme power from the hands of perhaps the only *real republican*, and the only *really disinterested and virtuous citizen*, that nation ever had,— General Cavaignac.* Of the period of time after the establishment of the republic, and thence to the election of Louis Napoleon, we know enough from various sources, and comprehensive and minute accounts are not wanting of the events of these nine or ten months,— accounts too, which, coming from different sides, keep one another in check, and enable the reader to ascertain where the truth is to be discovered. But with regard to the Revolution of February itself, this is by no means the case, and the only statements extant concerning it are either incomplete or *ex parte* statements ; for the very good reason that, more or less, all the *capacities* of France belonged to the vanquished forces, and

* A great deal would need to be said, were we writing the history of the "Republic" of 1848, upon the sad irresolution and weakness of General Cavaignac, to which the entire civil war of the month of June may be ascribed ; but it was his way of leaving the Presidency that showed him so great and good a citizen.

that, however they might, *before* the catastrophe, have been divided into the “dynastic” and “opposition” camps, they were, *after* it, united by the one vast and common ruin of all their hopes and expectations. In the defeat, which made little or no distinction between any of its victims, but huddled together adversaries so bitter even as M. Guizot and M. Thiers, in order to make room for men like Marrast and Arago,—in this utter defeat there was no sense in recrimination, and no advantage could come of their telling tales of one another. No tales, therefore, were told; and it is perfectly true, as Lord Normanby observes, that the causes and the conduct of the Revolution of February—what provoked and what destroyed it—have been so marvellously plunged into oblivion, that the very individuals who, by their blind obstinacy and their narrow and miserable ambition, made the insurrection inevitable, are now associated in the minds of thousands with those who in 1848 were their uncompromising foes, and systems are built up in which such a reunion is to be the best and surest guaranty of a constitutional future for France. Of the reasons against these and other similar illusions, Lord Normanby's work gives us the best explanation we have seen. He has a right to the “conviction” he himself avows, of being “a competent and trustworthy witness,” and he gives us information which no one else could have so easily commanded, and which those who could perhaps have obtained it were too devoted to the views of party to communicate. Lord Normanby's book is valuable beyond measure from the portrait it gives of the politician who, together with Louis Philippe, is responsible for all the tribulations and disasters of France since 1848,—of M. Guizot; and should all the antagonists of the Bonapartist *régime*, for a thousand petty reasons, unite to laud even more than they have the man who connived at the corruption and disgrace of a great country during eight years, and should, for equally petty reasons, his sometime enemies agree to remain in silence, and the host of lookers-on who condemned him let their determined belief sink into oblivion,—should all these saving circumstances unite to rescue M. Guizot's renown, the simple, straightforward, and true record kept by the English ambassador will yet be at hand to dis-

prove all favorable allegations patched up after the event, and to overthrow all fictions, showing the last prime minister of the Orleans dynasty as he really was, an unscrupulous, unconscientious, and arrogant, rather than an ambitious man. There are in France many, perhaps, who *now*, for the sake of small interests of their own, would try to seem disdainful of Lord Normanby's recent publication, and who would like nothing better than to deny his assertions in the gross; but *facts* are there,—hard, inevitable facts,—and there is *no* man involved in the world of politics in France, who, if such and such passages of the book under our notice were placed before his eyes, could venture for one single instant to say, “That is not true.” But the facts, authentic as they are, have been forgotten,—that is all; and Madame de Staél's words are once more applicable: “If the French had not such a marvellous capacity of forgetfulness, no two public men would be able to meet without cutting each other's throats.” As we have said, Lord Normanby's work contains the truest portrait of M. Guizot which anywhere exists at the present day. But this is not all. At the same time that it shows how unstable must be the political edifice built up on the momentary good intelligence of men who not long ago were, *for serious motives*, standing with daggers drawn, it also contains a grave warning to the actual rulers of France; for while painting the evils which resulted from the base corruption and occult absolutism of Louis Philippe, it clearly paints the perils that are every day courted now by a system whose corruption is still more radical, and whose absolutism is far more offensively obtrusive.

Before going further, we must say a few words upon the reproach that has been cast on Lord Normanby for having divulged what ought to have remained for ever buried in the grave of diplomacy. Lord Normanby has so little incurred this blame in any part of his book, that he in no one single instance allows his official character to bear upon what he writes, and even goes so far as, when events are irrevocably past, to refrain from making any use of what his official position might have put him in the way of knowing. Out of all his many diplomatic conversations with M. Guizot, he does

not quote one, but judges him from circumstances which lay open to the judgment of all men, yet which, in France, have been insufficiently recorded, from the want of impartial minds to appreciate them. Of what took place between himself and M. de Lamartine after the establishment of the provisional government, and before that of the republic, Lord Normanby has spoken more fully, because during this period his situation was changed. There was, at that moment, no British embassy, for the court to which it was accredited had disappeared, and after the Orleans dynasty had been overthrown, until the Republic had been formally set up as the national government of France, the late ambassador of Queen Victoria was no longer an *official*, but rather an *officious* agent, not accredited to any individual or to any body assuming the responsibilities of *a state*, and merely, by his presence in the capital, reassuring the timid herd of his astonished compatriots, who could not imagine how a throne could be shattered as had been that of Louis Philippe, in twenty-four hours, before their eyes. Having glanced at this unfounded accusation against the author, we will turn to his book, and examine, first, what, to a spectator so well placed for seeing all that was going on, were the indications of impending evil prior to the sudden outburst.

The first entry in Lord Normanby's *Journal* bears the date of July 30, 1847. He looks as dispassionately as forebodingly at the general aspect of France seven months before the Revolution of 1848, on the anniversary of the Revolution of 1830. July, 1847, is also a date coincident with the virtual close of the session of that same year, and for these two reasons the English ambassador, who had, as he himself says, "been for a long time a constant and most attentive observer of all that was passing in France," felt desirous to render to himself a clear and just account of what was the real condition of the country. The anniversary of the *Trois Glorieuses*, as they were called, was just over, and the last rocket had gone up from the Pont de la Concorde, (a strange name, given, one would think, almost in derision,) leaving the vast and crowded area of the Champs Elysées and Place Louis XV. in darkness, when the representative of the monarchy of

“Old England,” who had purposely mingled all the evening with the groups of people in the streets, returned to his princely residence, and there, undisturbed by any outward sight or sound, plunged in silence and in reflection, recalled to his own mind, in a distinct and definite shape, what had been the impression produced upon him by the attitude of the populace a few hours previously.

“I wish I could arrive at any other conclusion,” writes Lord Normanby, “than this,—that a very great shock has been given to public confidence in the future duration of a government which (however precarious its original foundation) has latterly been accepted as a settled member of the European powers.”

After this remark (which proves less for the writer's perspicacity than for his candor, since thousands of persons partook of these fears, but refused to own them) the English diplomatist continues:—

“I believe, in the present state of society in this country, and putting the dangers of the struggle out of the question, *no change for the better* would be likely to result from such a struggle.”

The event has, alas! but too amply justified the belief expressed above; and there is one other lesson contained in this book which we have omitted to note,—the proof how perpetually the French nation loses its best chances of political weight and well-being by its impatience, by its undue haste to attain to something (it seldom well knows what) that shall be different from, and, in its imagination, immeasurably preferable to, the existing *régime*. “*À force de chercher le mieux, l'homme perd le bien, et tombe dans le pire*,” says the Prince de Ligne. This is true of every moment of French history for the last seventy years. We have only to read any of the historians (barring the *ultras* on either side) of the so-called “Great Revolution,” to perceive that, had not impatience got the better of the ignorant masses, and of their nearly as ignorant leaders, there were scarcely any of the constitutional liberties of constitutionally free England to which France would not gradually and necessarily have attained, with Louis XVI. and the institutions he was ready to sanction. Upon the mind of whomsoever takes the trouble to read atten-

tively the three volumes published five years ago by M. de Barante, containing Mirabeau's correspondence with M. de Lamarque, and Mirabeau's Memoirs and Reports, submitted to the king himself, there can remain no doubt of the possibility that existed of averting the worst calamities of the Revolution of 1793, and of the certainty, had these been averted, of the French nation's securing to itself a government more stable, more entitled to universal esteem, and *more liberal by far*, than any it has ever enjoyed. Impatience and want of sound political sense destroyed everything; and the sternest of military despots crushed the country that had rebelled against the idea of being led. Under the empire alone may France be said to have been powerless to modify, or indeed in any way to meddle with, her own destinies. Here she was in the hands of a *master*, whose mere instrument she was, and who did not care for her co-operation. For this, too, Bonaparte fell. With the Restoration the old game was played over again. As long as Louis XVIII. lived, constitutional government in all sincerity was established, and the nearest approach to genuine prosperity and liberalism was made that has been noticeable in France since the days of Henri IV. On the advent of Charles X., however, the old susceptibilities burst forth, the frantic fears of both parties—ultra Royalists and *Jacobins*—took entire possession of each, and the incurable impatience of the race complicated all. The events are even now staring one in the face, which prove that France will quietly submit to fifty times worse than what Charles X. and the Polignac ministry had contemplated inflicting upon her by the *coup d'état* of 1830. It is not, therefore, the act of oppression itself, decided upon by the king, that is to be regarded as the cause perfectly adequate to the consequences entailed; it is the over-haste of the nation, which, *finding itself able to vanquish the resistance it met with*, rushed onward with heedless, headlong speed, *neither looking behind nor forward*, but simply bent upon the work of destruction, and full of the false fancy that whatever *might be* and *was not*, was to be preferred to what was.

Charles X. was a weak rather than a foolish man; he was in the hands of a party so absurd and retrograde, that, had the

parliamentary institutions (which he had no thought of suspending) lasted a few months longer, it must necessarily have been set aside and rendered innocuous. He was a mistaken, let us say the word,—a *bad* king; but the force of constitutionalism was still great in France, and had patience and moderation been on the side of the opposition, there can be no doubt now that the king and his government would have been quietly, and without violence, *obliged* to pursue such a line of conduct as would have shortly insured to France a state of things infinitely preferable to all she has been subjected to since. But her childish impatience would have it otherwise. The Revolution of July succeeded, vanquishers and vanquished being (as in 1848) equally unprepared for the event. A monarchy, that had none of the advantages of either a monarchy or a republic, was set up. Charles X., with the Duc de Bordeaux, went to Holyrood, Louis Philippe took his cousin's *place* at the Tuilleries; we purposely omit to say his cousin's *throne*, because it was designedly left undecided by the politicians of the hour, when "concession" was the universal watch-word, whether there was a "throne" or not. Hence all the mischief. Louis Philippe's power *never* was clearly defined, and he labored during eighteen years to secure surreptitiously what he did not dare openly to lay hands upon. Here was the history of all his various ministries, agreed with to-day, treacherously suffered to drop to-morrow. He was for ever between two distinct sets of ministers,—those who boldly contradicted and opposed, and those who mischievously flattered and succumbed to him; both illegal and unconstitutional. But, as by the fact of duration itself many vices of origin may be wiped out, so, in its tenth or twelfth year, the government of Louis Philippe had grown to be one which, with prudence and honesty, might yet have been the source of much future benefit to the nation. Both prudence and honesty were wanting, and the impatience we have already noted was there to take the first, worst, irreparable advantage of their absence.

Here we recur at once to what we said in the beginning, that there exists nowhere so good a portrait, so thorough a likeness, of M. Guizot, as in Lord Normanby's work. Most

truly does the British diplomatist assert (and, if we are not mistaken, he is the only individual who has ever so expressed himself) : " It was not the English alliance which made M. Guizot unpopular, but his own personal unpopularity, which had its influence upon public opinion as to that alliance." This is profoundly true ; the national dislike to M. Guizot had risen to such a height, that any line of policy advocated by him would have been distasteful to the country. Let us briefly recall what were the exterior circumstances of the eventful time marked by the downfall of the Orleans house.

It will be remembered that one remark often made, and with truth, is, that never since 1830 had Louis Philippe's power appeared to repose upon a basis so solid or so strong as at the period of the election which last preceded the catastrophe of February. And never did a general election return a Chamber of Deputies whose majority was so devoted to the maintenance of the existing order of things, so disdainful of the notion of there being any prospect of danger, or so thoroughly, entirely, blindly " satisfied " with every act and thought of the government. And herein lay the mischief. "*Les satisfait*," as the ministerial majority was termed, (at whose head and whose chief spokesman was, curiously enough, Count Morny,) lost the ministry and the crown by the very fact of their " satisfaction." Had they been less " satisfied," the population out of doors would have conceived it had a better right to be content ; and this is easily explained in a few words.

Let it be remembered that the electoral corps of France, *nominally* of nearly three hundred thousand souls, was, by the signal and deplorable carelessness of Frenchmen as to the exercise of their political rights, reduced to an *acting* body of not much more than forty thousand, little more than the number of electors who send members to Parliament for the city of London. Evidently, the action of self-interest was available to an unscrupulous government over such a comparatively small portion of the country. We think it is more than questionable whether, upon any preconceived plan, M. Guizot or the king ever sought to make a deliberate and ingeniously combined system of corruption a means whereby

to render France subservient to their designs; but her readiness to be corrupted soon forced itself upon their observation, and they profited to the utmost extent by the experience each day afforded them. If we hold fast by this double thread,—the corruptibility of France and the expediency of corruption admitted by the government,—we shall quickly seize upon what Lord Normanby aptly terms the “*real operating causes* which produced what was called the great conservative majority of 1846,” which “majority,” had it been either less “great” or less “conservative,” might have given to the institutions it involved in its ruin a chance of outliving its dissolution.

“There exists,” writes Lord Normanby, in July, 1847, “in the present state of France no attachment to any individual, and no respect for any institution; and the system [the monarchy of July] has been maintained by its identification with the *material* interests of the middle classes. ‘*Enrichissez vous!*’ has long been said to be the paternal admonition addressed from the throne to the people.”

Now, as our author himself subsequently observes, there cannot be a better or firmer foundation of power than the wealth of the race ruled over, and the honest and independent efforts made by it to secure that wealth. But in promoting this state of things, if any genuine advantage is to be reaped by the nation and its government, the part played by the latter must be an indirect one. So long as, by its prudence, its liberality, its honesty, its tendency to advance with its age, it protects industry and capital, and by the equity of its laws, the natural workings of its institutions, and the impartiality shown to all, it helps the utmost development of national trade, whilst attracting both the commerce and the wealth of foreign countries, so long does the government of a country do its best and utmost to establish itself durably, and to make the commercial, nay, the *pecuniary* ambition of its population its surest source of prosperity. But so soon as a government descends to play a *direct* part in the schemes of a portion of the governed for gaining money; so soon as it plans, speculates, and jobs for and with these, bartering for parliamentary support an influence which it illegally wields, and which, from the moment of the transfer, it can only temporarily endure;—

so soon as this becomes the practice of the government, changes and revolutions may be foreseen in the state,— revolutions whose less or greater degree of violence depends upon the character of the race that undertakes them, and upon the predominance of its political good sense over its impatience, or *vice versa*.

With the government of July financial speculation and *robbery* were caught at as the surest means of political corruption. The end to be gained momentarily was the maintenance of M. Guizot in office, and to effect this end, which, in the narrowest legal point of view, depended upon a parliamentary majority, that parliamentary majority was simply secured by *purchase*, or the *promise* of purchase. The department chiefly forced into serving this dishonest purpose was that of Public Works; and here, the abuse of ministerial patronage and influence in connection with great public enterprises, in order that the resources of the government might be brought to bear upon the elections, was something passing description. But for the hour success crowned the efforts (we are inclined to say the *intrigues*) of the ministry and of the king, and a formidable majority backed M. Guizot in 1847 against the nation; yet so overstrained were all the springs of parliamentarism, that the institution itself paid the penalty for the crimes of those who had falsified it, and it has since become possible for despotism to represent a constitutional government in the eyes of the French nation, as one in which the interests of the *mass* are deliberately sacrificed to those of the infinitesimally few, and in which what should be the frank and free discussion of the country's affairs is simply a pretext for the self-glorification of half a dozen rapacious and ambitious men, who merge every other consideration in that of their own lust for power, and the various advantages secured to them by office. If it has, within the last six or seven years, been possible, not perhaps to make the French nation actually believe this, but to make it listen not incredulously to the assertion, the responsibility of the fact lies with M. Guizot. Wilfully or not,— that is unimportant,— parliamentary institutions were betrayed by M. Guizot in such a manner that he, more than any man or any circumstance, has to answer to his coun-

try for its loss of a constitutional form of government. Yet — and here lies the proof of that forgetfulness inherent in Frenchmen which makes Lord Normanby's book so useful — it is now a fashion, a general habit in France, to rank M. Guizot among the foremost parliamentarians of the day, and to name him loudly at the head of those at whose hands, should the empire ever be overthrown, the lovers of constitutional freedom would have most to expect in the formation of any future and more genuinely national government. It is a common thing within the last two or three years to see, placed side by side in opposition to the imperial *régime* (which never could have existed except for their faults), the names of those very men who in 1847 and 1848 passed their days in publicly declaring their mutual disesteem for each other's characters. The following passage upon the Guizot cabinet in the last months of 1847 is worth quoting :—

“ The position of the two leading members of the government is as different as their characters are opposite, and therefore it has been supposed that M. Guizot is the one who has influenced his colleagues to cling on to the last. I have been told by those who know him well, that he is comparatively ignorant of the details of administration, or of the bearings of any commercial or financial question, on a clear view of which, in time of peace, the relative value of statesmen must depend. In all these respects he is said to be completely dependent on his connection with M. Duchâtel, who, on the other hand, is personally popular, successful in dealing with men, and unrivalled in his aptitude for affairs, though the peculiar facilities he possesses are neutralized by an overpowering and increasing indolence. With his large fortune and careless habits, no one suspects him of personal corruption. He has, however, yielded to the wishes of M. Guizot, who exercises over him that ascendancy which, in public affairs, always belongs to a strong will over a weak one. Such being the disposition of the sovereign and his ministers, with whom during the recess the matter rests, I do not expect that there will be any change of government, even should the resignation of Marshal Soult furnish an occasion for it; but that, on the contrary, M. Guizot will be gratified for a few months with the Presidency of the Council, to which title he is said to look with an almost childish ambition.” *

* A proof of this is recorded in the Memoirs (to be published only after his death) of one of the highest functionaries of that time. It is as follows: “ The day M.

Here allusion is made to a trait of M. Guizot's character, insufficiently observed by some (for a reason we will give anon) or purposely forgotten by those who from personal experience could not choose but recognize it,—his excessive, incredible vanity. Because his attitude in public and the characteristics of his oratorical genius savored of haughtiness, and because disdain suited him so well that it was at last said of him, in vulgar phrase, "*Il pose le dédain*," he was supposed to be *proud*, and not vain; but the truth of the matter was, as all those who had lived with him and penetrated him well knew, that he was both vain and proud. The *ostensible* friendships—we mean by that term those friendships from which he took honor to himself in public—even of Louis Philippe's minister, were all based upon his vanity; and the attachment, notorious to all Europe, which had such an influence over all his acts, and which mainly contributed to all his mistakes, had its principal root in the gratification it afforded that same vanity from the high rank of the person concerned, and the position occupied by that person in the diplomatic world of Europe. Nay, we will go farther, (and we shall not be contradicted by any one who was familiarly acquainted with M. Guizot, and least of all by any of his colleagues,) and we will assert that the fatal Spanish marriages (about which at the same time England made far more noise than they deserved) had a part of their *raison d'être* in M. Guizot's vanity; and had the settlement of the alliance brought to him less importance and fewer coveted distinctions, he would have been much more disposed to attend to the susceptibilities of the British government.

This forces us to a digression concerning the social civilization of modern France. Had M. Guizot been an Englishman, and placed in England in the position corresponding to that he occupied in France, his vanity might have for ever lain dormant; for his *social superiority* would have been so frankly admitted, that he would have never found any occasion save for affability. This is not so in France. There is still a society superior to all others in that country, in a *purely social*

Guizot was made President of the Council, he called on reaching home for his eldest daughter, and addressed her thus: 'My child, embrace your father; for at this hour God only and the king are above him in this kingdom of France.'

point of view, and that very society is politically nothing. The old *noblesse* has lost none of its superficial superiority, and it makes greater pretensions than in the days of St. Simon. We repeat it, politically this “closed caste” is less than nothing, but socially it is still a great fact, and the proof that it is so lies in the circumstance that every other superiority, no matter of what kind, is irresistibly attracted towards it. Now, this society disdained the “men of July,” as they were called, and many of them by no means disdained it. In this antagonism (ever to be deplored, for it multiplies and perpetuates the petty divisions and dislikes that distract the social state of France) is to be discovered the source of the vanity which, had he been the really *proud* nature that was imagined, could never have sprung up among M. Guizot’s faults. In this vanity we have the answers to so many recent questions; for example, Why does M. Guizot become all at once an ardent legitimist, mindful only of the “rights of the elder branch,” and oblivious that whatever he is in the pages of French history he owes entirely to the defeat of that branch, and to the accession of the Orleans family to power? And again, Why does M. Guizot in the Académie Française side only with the party that represents, not the aristocracy of talent, but the talent of aristocracy, forgetful in his sudden sympathies with M. le Comte de Montalembert that he is a sectary of that Protestant faith which his noble friend would willingly reduce to wander homeless over the world like the legendary Jew; preferring his place as colleague of M. le Duc de Noailles to a connection with any untitled poet or historian, however illustrious; and foremost in the work of excluding the members of that noble literary profession, to which he owes his celebrity, his political career, and the possibility afforded him of rising sufficiently high in the social scale to appear to treat it with contempt? Each of these questions provokes but one answer, *Vanity*. But, at the same time, it is not merely interesting to watch the existence of this foible in a man of distinguished intelligence; it is also important to note in what degree it is derived from, and is made almost inevitable by, the peculiarities of a social civilization strong and enduring as ever, yet alone of its species in the world, and opposed to the spirit of the age.

We give Lord Normanby no small credit for having discovered M. Guizot's "childish" vanity; for though acknowledged by those who had opportunities of studying the man, it was, as we have said, a defect the less obtrusive, because it seemed incompatible with another supposed to be the minister's ruling sin,—with that pride which M. Guizot sought to make more evident every day, and inseparable from the mere mention of his name. Now if to this secretly active vanity we add an indifference to truth that has perhaps seldom been carried so far in any man,—particularly in any man of intellect and education,—we shall be in possession of the *first causes* of all that M. Guizot ever was, and shall have clearly laid before us the *principia* of the philosophy on which he acted. His vanity led him to commit many of his mistakes, but did not place him face to face with what proved them to be such; whereas his disrespect for truth brought him into collision with an angry nation, and lay in fact at the bottom of all that ended in his overthrow.

M. Guizot's utter indifference to truth amounted to a psychological phenomenon. It was not only that he had no scruples about asserting what was not true. Men in public life have been known to do this in order to avert personally vexatious consequences, or to extricate themselves from embarrassment, yet still recognizing the value and power of truth in the abstract; but he did not believe the true to be better, or stronger, or more fruitful than the false. He fancied that a constant *appearing to be* was the same thing as *being* in reality. He was persuaded of the solidity of fiction, of the use and trustworthiness of what was not, and all his historical studies did not prevent him from holding the absurd theory, that a deception may be so well organized as to serve the purposes of a reality, and that an entire nation may be permanently governed by pretences, perpetually cajoled and "taken in," provided only that they who are charged with this work play their parts sufficiently well, and are never off their guard. Louis Philippe's last prime minister was seriously convinced of the possibility that human ability and *finesse* should get the better of eternal truth; and it must be confessed he had to deal with a sovereign whose principles and practice tended in no

way to weaken such opinions. Louis Philippe, like his minister, believed that Providence could be outwitted. Both these miscalled statesmen were perfectly aware how they had produced the conservative majority of 1846; they knew that it was a parliamentary or constitutional majority as unreal as ninety-nine hundredths of the promises whereby they had succeeded in framing it; yet they leaned upon it as though they were not of all human beings those best acquainted with its frailty. They alone could not be deceived in what was going on; they had with their own hands fabricated and painted an image, meant to represent what they knew it was not, and they then exposed this same image to the attacks of the cheated and furious public, as though it had been of adamant. They had not forgotten its weakness, but in their disrespect for the true they actually believed the nation would take it to be strong. Such utter contempt for a whole race, and for the immortal principles of truth, was perhaps never before shown by the governors of any country.*

What happened? "The recent prostitution of the majority in the Chamber of Deputies, to screen the corruption of the ministry," (here we quote Lord Normanby,) "had directed public attention afresh to this branch of the legislature." Thither, where the lie had its foundation,—all the rest being but a superstructure,—thither was the attention of the country turned at once. Misgovernment was a consequence, corruption was a consequence; that which made all practicable, and covered all, was the falsehood of the so-called parliamentary majority, composed in the proportion of more than one half of public functionaries. It has often been wondered at that the French ministry in 1848, and the king at its head, should have stood out so determinedly upon what seemed a question of detail, and upon what by the public generally was characterized as a reform threatening none of the main-springs of government. Such was not the view taken of the case by M. Guizot and the king. They saw at once, on the contrary, that, with any modification in the mode of parliamentary rep-

* The same reproach may be addressed to the present government in France; but it does not *take in* the country; it rules as if over a conquered people, which quite alters the position.

resentation, the main-springs of their governing machinery must be destroyed. With them the question was, "To be or not to be,"—nothing less; and had this not been the case, the stand that was made would never have been dreamed of. From the moment that the words "electoral reform" had been spoken in France, the "system" personified by Louis Philippe and his minister was condemned, and the struggle had commenced between those two most incompatible elements, the False and the True. It was a common thing to hear indifferent lookers-on say, "What do all those snobs and cheese-mongers who shout '*Vive la Réforme!* ' know about the question?" and the inquiry was in some respects a fitting one. They did individually know little or nothing of what they were clamoring for, yet their clamor was just, and in raising it they obeyed the promptings of the public conscience, which but echoes the whisper of Providence, and, whilst clearly explicable perhaps to no one single man, forces onward a whole nation to what is its immediate aim.

The revolution of February was perverted from its original intent so rapidly, that, as the author of the book we are treating of remarks, too little recollection of what its origin was has been retained. Its origin was *universal contempt* for the then governmental system of France, and it was all the more easily and rapidly perverted from its origin, because this feeling of contempt was universal, and by no means confined to this or that isolated and particular object. The revolution of February had *no leaders* in the beginning; Lamartine, Arago, Ledru Rollin, and the rest, were *its associates*, but had not attempted to direct it to any definite purpose. This absence of leaders ensued from the fact, that the revolution of February was not a political one; it was moral, even more than social. It was the sudden and almost involuntary uprising of a population in disgust; but in disgust at a tendency rather than at a fact. It was even more a *coup de tête* than a *coup de nation*, as it was styled; and this alone can explain both the want of resistance on the part of the government before what was felt to be a national protest of overpowering sincerity, and the failure, on that of the revolution, to transform into a political movement what had been merely an outburst of passion.

If one had asked an insurgent on the Boulevards what were the workings of ministerial corruption, and *how* they would be checked by that *reform* he was even then fighting for, gun in hand, he would have been unable to give a satisfactory answer; but as a part and parcel of offended France he knew, by the intuition which is God's secret, that he was cheated, cajoled, laughed at, taken in, and that the man who did all this, and who had faith in the possibility of going on doing it *ad infinitum*, was M. Guizot. Therefore he rebelled, and succeeded in his rebellion, throwing down all before him, simply because *this* movement, as far as it went, was a genuine and sincere one,—it *was* the revolt of truth against falsehood.

Now where did this movement end? It ended on the night of the 23d of February, with the one universal cry of “*À bas Guizot!*”—with the spontaneous illuminations of all the great Parisian thoroughfares on the news of the minister's fall,—with the joyous hand-shakings and embracings in the open streets of men who had never met before, who knew not each other's faces, but who were comrades in exultation over a common enemy's defeat. *All this was genuine*; what was *not* so, was what followed. The part played by the nation—by *all* the honest elements in it, a part, it must be admitted, as unreflecting as it was full of indignation—came to its end with the change of ministry, and before the fall of the king. Few or none had contemplated the overthrow of the throne. When we say this, we say it as comprehensively as possible, and we affirm that, previously to the event itself, even the ultra republicans—communists, socialists, demagogues, or by whatever name they may be called—had not plotted for the destruction of the Orleans dynasty, because they imagined that this “consummation” of their wishes would come about inevitably at the king's death. *Premeditatively*, therefore, (if the word may be allowed,) nothing was settled on the eve of the outbreak of 1848; and a further proof of this may be found in the fact that, when the utmost which could happen *had* happened, no one was prepared, and Armand Marrast himself adjured M. de Lamartine not to dream of the republic, but to be content to try the regency. No! what

was sincere, and consequently powerful, in the uprising of February, was spontaneous and unreflecting. Regardless of what might ensue, it had but one object and aim,—the victory over the Guizot ministry.

“When the National Guard was called out for the first time on the Wednesday morning (23d),” says our author, “most of the battalions then mustered received the first word of command with cries of ‘*À bas Guizot!*’ No one who had not passed the few preceding weeks in Paris could have any idea of the amount of unpopularity which that minister had accumulated upon himself. *It was universal.* It pervaded alike the *salons*, the *cafés*, and the crowded streets. This torrent of popular odium, continually rising, threatened to flood the very benches of the majority; and its force was every day fed by the whole of the press, with one solitary exception.” *

We think, therefore, that it is perfectly just to assert, (and indeed events are explicable only from this one point of view,) that M. Guizot was the determining cause, as his downfall was the immediate object, of the revolution of February. It is therefore obvious,—as the writer of the book before us observes,—that the circumstances of the revolution are almost entirely forgotten in France; and this simple fact is probably big with endless mistakes and perplexities in the future history of that country.

It might perhaps gratify curiosity to show to what a degree of unconstitutionality M. Guizot, by his culpable connivance with the king, and by his own utter want of political probity, had brought the workings of the French government. In fact, the rule of the prince who had been raised to power by the insurgents of July, and whose first step to the throne had been a barricade, was far more arbitrary than had ever been the rule of the unlucky monarch whom he supplanted. It ought not to be forgotten that something analogous to what passes now in France, when France is confessedly under a despotic government, went on under Louis Philippe when

* The *Journal des Débats*. But here Lord Normanby is mistaken. The *Revue des Deux Mondes* had so thoroughly gone over to the ministry, that, on the 1st of December, 1847 (two months before the catastrophe), it opened its pages by a long article in vindication and praise both of minister and majority, which was nicknamed “*Le Programme des Satisfaits*,” and which, to make the circumstance more curious, was written and signed by none other than Count Morny.

France was assured that she was the freest of nations. What says Lord Normanby in 1847, six months before the final outbreak, but when the popular sense was awakened to the danger, and had fastened upon electoral reform as a necessity?

“At this moment the Mayors of the Communes are, *at the command of government*, forbidding the deputies to meet their constituents at political dinners, *even within doors*; a step either producing needless irritation, or showing an ominous necessity.”

In the same connection, it is proved from the example of the luckless *Courier Français* (a journal which, for attacking ministerial corruption, was most arbitrarily dealt with) how questionable was the freedom of the press. Then, again, when the struggle came in the Chambers, let it not pass from the memory *what* were the arguments by which the friends of the ministry defended it. Let, for instance, that famous *séance* of the first days of February be recalled, in which M. Hébert, the Minister of Justice and Keeper of the Seals, tried to reply to the accusations of the opposition by arguments which would, at the utmost, have been in their proper place in the mouth of the minister of some avowedly autocratic government.

“Yesterday,” writes the British ambassador, under date of the 10th of February, 1848, “the exasperation reached its height (in the Chamber), when M. Hébert, the *Garde des Sceaux*, delivered a speech containing doctrines which certainly no minister for the last one hundred and fifty years would ever have ventured to pronounce in England.”

Assuredly Lord Normanby is right when he says this; for the doctrines set forth by M. Hébert aimed at nothing less than to show that “*the right of political discussion had never been intended to be conferred upon Frenchmen*,” that no such right was specified by the charter of 1830, and that “no liberties were secured but those which were there enumerated”! Any one who takes the trouble to consult the *Moniteur* of February, 1848, will find that M. Hébert repeated this assertion several times, and persons present could not but feel that the whole attitude and bearing of the Minister of Justice depended upon those of his chief, and that his words were but the issue of M. Guizot’s constant inspiration. This is all

the more strange when we consider, that on the 28th of September, 1830, M. Guizot himself, then Minister of the Interior, had uttered the following sentence : " Yes ! the citizens have the right to meet to discuss amongst themselves public affairs ; *it is good they should do so, and never will I contest that right.*" " Other times, other customs," as the French say. With the extraordinary facility of forgetfulness inherent in the men of his nation, M. Guizot had probably not the dimmest remembrance of ever having committed himself to the maintenance of the right of popular discussion. But what is more strange is that his enemies also had apparently forgotten the fact ; for they took the arguments for urging their accusations from another point of view. Instead of proclaiming him in absurd and flagrant contradiction with himself, they preferred proving him to be more absolute and arbitrary than the government to which the Orleans dynasty had succeeded. " This is Polignac and Peyronnet !" exclaimed Odilon Barrot, when M. Hébert's speech was ended ; and he then added, that indeed M. de Peyronnet would not have spoken as the Garde des Sceaux had just spoken ; for that in the spring of the year 1830 he, Odilon Barrot, had found it perfectly possible to preside over a political reunion similar to that which the government was now trying to prevent, and that the then ministers had respected his rights.

A question often asked at the present day is this : " How came it that France, who can now sit down so tamely under the suppression of all her liberties, should have sufficiently cared for any one of those liberties to make a national stand for the acquisition of it ? " And it is concluded that the Revolution of February was not a national movement, but merely the work of a few ambitious and disappointed men, whose *instruments* were the ultra Republicans, socialists, communists, and the like,—these instruments having, when the victory was gained, got considerably the better of their employers, and established absolute anarchy and unbearable insecurity in the place of what was bearable unconstitutionality. This is the position assumed by the champions of the Guizot ministry ; but it is utterly false, and it is, in our opinion, of extreme importance that as few persons as possible should in

any country be misled upon this subject. It is certain that the French nation does, at this moment, quietly submit to the most uncompromising despotism that can be conceived ; but it is not true that France *never* cared for the freedom her neighbors enjoy. We will in a few words recapitulate the progress of events during the period of M. Guizot's long ministry, and it will be seen that, up to the moment when the whole country "lost its head," France gave no one a right to advance the opinion that she was fitted only to engender a race of slaves.

When M. Guizot succeeded M. Thiers, in the year 1840, he had against him chiefly the more warlike and anti-English portion of the nation,—the portion which saw in every step taken by the government a concession to *la perfide Albion*. Naturally all his efforts were directed at first towards the means of damping this excessive ardor, and, by associating to himself all the great industrial and manufacturing interests of France, he did really for a time draw over to the government the steadier and more responsible part of the population. But this very circumstance, by showing him how easy it might be in France to make interest predominate over chivalrous zeal, misled both the minister and the king, and they went too far, got beyond their depth, and were lost. The violent cry raised against England, and against the system of what was termed "Peace at any price," was not the result of a very deep-seated or real feeling in the nation; whereas the industrial movement was a genuine one, and the development of the national production and of the national wealth was a fact on which much might have been based, and which might have been endlessly prolific in good results. This freedom was more than ever required, and a pure-handed government, dealing impartially with all, was a *sine qua non*. Louis Philippe and M. Guizot, however, liked narrow and tortuous ways, believed in them, and pursued them. For four or five years they perceived that the force of reaction against the wrong-headed *exalté* war-party had summoned around the government the more sober part of the community, and they forthwith set to work to make well better, and to put the majority necessary to their existence out of

the reach, as they thought, of contingencies. Meanwhile the country looked on, not perhaps quite approvingly, but at least with comparative indifference. These small manœuvres of the king and his prime minister were conducted in an underhand manner through the years 1843-45, and only every now and then a slight scandal rose to the surface, and bore witness by the bursting of all its bubbles to what was passing beneath. Public opinion became uneasy and preoccupied. Still a certain conviction remained that France was governed by parliamentary institutions, that Louis Philippe was a constitutional king, and that, if the ministers did not do their duty to the nation, the nation possessed, *in the form of its constitution*, the necessary means of getting rid of men who had betrayed their trust. So long as this belief continued, the country was patient, relying upon its power of appeal to the majority in parliament, which was its representative and the guardian of its rights, and supposing that, after all, when the ministerial corruption should become intolerable, and its excesses be *proved* to the majority, that majority would turn round and defend the country by putting the ministers to shame.

This is a circumstance in the history of the events that preceded the Revolution of 1848, which has never, we think, been sufficiently dwelt upon, and contemporary historians have passed too lightly over that delicate turning-point in the affairs of the French people of our day, when they exchanged a state of confidence in the institutions by which they were governed, for one of suspicion, and took the resolve, for the first time, of examining the integrity of their parliamentary institutions themselves. In 1846, as we have already observed, first came into play the absolutely fictitious majority framed and fabricated by M. Guizot and the king. Some slight doubt still lingered in the popular mind, and it waited and watched the details of each discussion with intense anxiety, every laborer even devouring the contents of one or more daily papers. The majority worked well for its creators,—too well; for its imperturbably regular movements were not natural. Scandal after scandal burst forth; the majority remained unmoved. Proof after proof of corruption was brought before it;—it disdained them all, and went on

working better than ever. But this could not last. With this would-be majority “satisfied” with whatever the ministers did or did not do, content to receive all their explanations, and to throw a veil over all their mistakes, the country ended by deciding that it would not co-operate; and its next most logical, most necessary step was to resolve upon discussing and *re-forming* the source whence such a majority could be derived. It is difficult to see how the country could behave otherwise than as it did in the beginning. Afterwards, every one must agree that a more deplorable scene of weakness and confusion can scarcely be imagined, than that presented by France between March, 1848, and December, 1851, or one that more necessarily prepared the country for the ambitious and unjustifiable designs so cleverly put into execution by the man who has now subjected the French people to his despotic will.

Everything contributed to render the Revolution of February abortive. The obstinacy first, and then the non-resistance, of the king; the arrogance of M. Guizot; the absence of any plan on the popular side, and the want of any leader,—all these several circumstances combined to provoke a national explosion, and to render its consequences profitable only to those who cared little for the dignity or the welfare of the nation. Had Louis Philippe not lost his best friend and adviser, Madame Adelaide,* he would have abandoned all thought of obstinate opposition to the desires of the country upon the question of electoral reform, and would have done so four or five months at least before the affair of the *Banquets*, which would then have had no pretext. Or, when once what *had originally been the peaceable, though determined, expression of the nation's opinion*, had degenerated into an *anarchical demonstration threatening all the property-holding classes*, had the king resisted, by the means offered him by Marshal Bugeaud, the evils of the Revolution of February would have been averted. But the king did neither. He resisted the honest indignation of the country, honestly expressed, until that country was exasperated, and rushed on, without plan or chief, to it knew not what; and he yielded to the noise and bluster of an ephemeral faction, that spread before his eyes all the worn-

* The king's sister, who died a few months before the winter of 1848.

out paraphernalia of revolt, all the “used up” machinery by which he himself had, eighteen years previously, been helped to mount the throne. But by yielding to the *parti du désordre*, as it was termed, *after* he had so long held out against the nation, he not only lost for his sons their part of royalty in France,—he gave France over to her worst enemies, to those whose aid she never invoked, and who, when the unlooked-for triumph came, turned round upon her to say that they had conquered in her name.

This is the one most important feature of the so-called Revolution of February, and the one which he who desires to study contemporary France should strive to impress most distinctly on his mind. The *immense majority* of the nation, the most enlightened, the freest, the most honest Frenchmen of all classes, did spontaneously, unanimously, and upon great and sufficient provocation, rise to protest against the unconstitutional practices of a ministry, whose dismissal they demanded from the king; and the immense majority of the nation did *not* ask for any change in its fundamental institutions, did not even contemplate a change of dynasty, and submitted, *with the king*, who deserted his trust, to the threats and violence of a desperate and well-armed mob. When we say that the greater part of the country submitted “with the king,” we do not mean to imply that any sympathy bound together Louis Philippe and the people, (for he had forfeited all the people’s sympathies,) but merely that the anarchical movement of 1848 was so far from finding in France an accomplice, that, on the contrary, France was its victim, in the same degree and at the same time with the king.

In our regard, there are few events of modern history more worthy of the political or philosophical student’s attention than the revolution, so often termed “inexplicable,” which is supposed to have begun by dethroning Louis Philippe in order to win more liberty, and which ended by casting thirty-five millions of human beings under a despot’s heel. But in the whole event there is from first to last one thing “inexplicable” except to those who are intimately acquainted with the political temperament of France, and that is the boundless *passiveness* with which nearly a whole nation suffered a compar-

atively small minority to establish a form of government in antagonism to all the national habits and predilections. This is an extraordinary fact, and to attempt accounting for it would carry us far beyond our present limits. What we have sought to do in these pages, is to restore its precise and real character to the outbreak of February, 1848, and to vindicate France — the most enlightened, perhaps, of all Continental countries in this most enlightened nineteenth century — from the disgraceful charge of utter indifference to political freedom. Lord Normanby's book is, in this respect, deserving of all commendation. He puts men and things in their true and proper places, and leaves the impartial reader no choice save to acknowledge that, had constitutional institutions been largely, liberally, *honestly* upheld by the government in France, those institutions would in all likelihood have continued to exist for an indefinite period of time; that it was to punish the deliberate perversion of constitutional institutions, and to render such perversion less easy for the future, that the majority of the nation, in obedience to public opinion, rose in 1848; and that M. Guizot, being the man who, with the blindest obstinacy and most determined disregard for truth and honesty, perverted the constitutional and representative institutions of France, — indirectly if not directly, — is the cause of the disrepute into which it has been possible to throw parliamentary liberty.

We recommend the "Journal of a Year of Revolution" to those who do not think monocratic despotism the ideal of all governmental forms, yet who may be curious to see how, by the mismanagement of its rulers, a free country may be reduced to look upon even this as a refuge.